

Republican Spending Bill Cuts Investments Needed to Out-Educate Global Competitors

The Republican Spending Bill does not make the tough choices between necessary cuts and smart investments in our future so that we can out-educate our competitors. The Republicans have put forward an irresponsible proposal that arbitrarily cuts:

- Head Start: kicking more than 200,000 children out of the program and laying off thousands of teachers
- Pell Grants: reducing the maximum award by \$845 and lowering the amount of aid that 9.4 million students are projected to receive
- Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: affecting over 2,000 schools serving nearly one million students that would lose funding for teachers, tutors and afterschool programs
- IDEA funding: laying off approximately 7,000 special education teachers and staff

In his State of the Union address last month, President Obama laid out his vision for ensuring American competitiveness, one that requires us to reduce spending, but not make cuts that undermine our nation's ability to out-educate the rest of the world. Over the past few decades, the United States has fallen behind our global competitors in education. In order to reverse the trend and again lead other nations, it is critical that we remain committed to investments in education.

"Maintaining our leadership in research and technology is crucial to America's success. But if we want to win the future — if we want innovation to produce jobs in America and not overseas — then we also have to win the race to educate our kids." —President Obama [State of the Union address, 01/25/11]

President Obama's Budget for fiscal year 2012 makes strategic investments in education so that we can maintain a competitive workforce. Among other investments, President Obama's proposal includes funding to:

- Prepare 100,000 science, technology, engineering and mathematics teachers of the next decade so that we can meet the demand for engineers;
- And made the tough choices necessary to maintain the maximum Pell Grant award so that more low-income Americans can attend higher education institutions.

The business community supports these investments:

"If we don't start innovating in education to make it better and more accessible, we won't fulfill our commitment to equal opportunity, and our competitiveness will fall behind that of other countries." -Bill Gates, Founder and Chairman of Microsoft Corporation [2010 Annual Gates Foundation Letter]

"The world has changed considerably in the past century, and our education system must keep pace. In 1950, 60% of all jobs were classified as 'unskilled' and available to those with high-school diplomas or less, according to research published by the Education Testing Services. Now more than 80% of jobs are skilled, requiring education and training beyond high school, according to research published by the Brookings Institution. For example, to work on the manufacturing floor at Intel today, an employee must have an associate's degree or higher... We have an obligation to prepare our students to be capable adult citizens." -Craig Barrett, CEO, Intel Corporation [4/6/10]

"Excellence in math, science, technology and engineering is the lifeblood of innovation," said Tillerson. "There is a direct correlation between excellence in math and science education and the ability of countries to successfully compete and prosper in the 21st Century. As the leader of a company that relies on technology and innovation for every part of our business, I am concerned the United States is falling behind." -Rex W. Tillerson, CEO, Exxon Mobil [2/16/10]

"We want to put a human face on a very sobering statistic — the U.S. ranks 35th in math and 29th in science worldwide — to spark a new level of interest among our kids so they are prepared for what lies ahead," stated. "As parents, educators, elected officials and business leaders, we need to do all we can to encourage our youth to take an active, enthusiastic interest in STEM and connect them to opportunities that stoke this passion." -Glenn Britt, CEO, Times-Warner Cable [11/17/10]

Democrats agree that we must reduce spending, but the Republicans have put forward an irresponsible plan that harms economic growth and job creation. Democrats are committed to working on a bipartisan basis to make strategic choices between necessary cuts and investments that will boost American competitiveness.

Office of Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 02/15/11